2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

491 others following the old, but all opening up the country and making possible better security and greater trade.

794 184 [178] At Yeshbum I stayed the night with a family of influential Saiyids. They were very pleasant people indeed on the surface, though the opening up of the country must have been disagreeable to all but the broad-minded among them, and Saiyids like other religious leaders, are not renowned for their broadness of mind. Inviolate as Saiyids, descendants of the Prophet Muhammed, shrewd business men who lend money against property mortgages, educated among an ignorant people, and by tradition the mediators in family and tribal disputes, they were powerful people whose influence was bound to be affected adversely as contact with the outer world increased and education became effective. My host of the evening was Sheikh Ali Jifri, a charming elderly gentleman much afflicted with rheumatism, who was far-sighted enough to recognise the inevitable and to accept a change which he knew to be in the interests of the Aulaki people. Unfortunately, he died not long after my visit and his kindly influence was removed from his brother and his sons and nephews. They have always been difficult and resentful and have never really co-operated in the setting up of the Aulaki administration and have not used their influence in the right direction in the Council Chamber. [185] Political interests in the neighbourhood of Aden and in the Colony itself and the acquisition of agricultural land in the rich cotton areas, have been their pursuits. Nasser of Egypt is their idol and independence is their goal. What a pity learned students of religion cannot be content with the greatest of all occupations, the bringing of the word of God to the people of this tortured earth. The truth is that the false gods of wealth and power attract descendants of the Prophet in the same way as other people, for after all, they are but human.

184 The following day we drove up the Wadi Yeshbum to Said, the capital of the State beneath whose ancient towers I was to be greeted by the Amir, his brothers and the tribal leaders. [541] They were all ready for us where the Wadi broadens just below the town and they formed a procession, firing their rifles in the traditional manner, while their poets composed

topical calypso or, to use their own word, *zewils*, rhyming lines with a topical theme, part repeated by the chorus of tribesmen. It was the first time I had seen one of these tribal demonstrations, and I was thrilled as the blue kilted tribesmen, led by their Amir, moved in what seemed to be a tail-less snake of men, three abreast, round and round, coiling and uncoiling while rifles were being fired in the air with a delightful disregard for the eventual destination of their contents among the surrounding hills.

The procession over, I walked up the Wadi with the Amir on one side and his eldest brother on the other, and as we passed a very modern-looking gun it commenced to fire my salute. It was some ten feet above us on the bank, and I inquired from where they had obtained the blank ammunition for the gun, for this was no black powder affair, and was not altogether surprised to learn that live ammunition was being used. I should like to have hastened my footsteps and got well clear before the next round, but that would have been very poorly thought of, so we continued our stately walk without haste or damage to anything, except our ear-drums.

The new administration made a good start, but that salute of guns had been heard in the Yemen, although nearly two years were to pass before the re-opening of an old family dispute split the ruling family and gave the Imam his opportunity. The Yemen took sides with money and gifts of rifles and ammunition, and once again shots whistled along the narrow streets of Said, and as the infection spread and the tribesmen became restive, Abdullah, the Amir, faced serious trouble. By the grace of God and the opportune visit to the Protectorate of the then Minister of State, Mr. Hopkinson, now Lord Colyton, the additional financial help we needed so badly was made available to the young and struggling administration. Much can be done with money in Arabia, even to the extent of starting and stopping wars, as Lawrence demonstrated in the Hedjaz.

A young Assistant Adviser came to the Aulaiki at the same time (the designation "Political Officer" had been abolished, and "Assistant Adviser" introduced as being more truly

396 lines of a military school where the discipline is strict and the
[292] boys are taught to be self-reliant. Dressed in their school
uniform of blue smock, gathered at the waist with a red sash
• [541] and a white cotton head cloth held in place by a black cord,
these boys put on a physical training display on gala occasions
which would not disgrace the Royal Tournament at Earl's
Court.

643 The old Sultan, His Highness Sir Saleh bin Ghalib,
K.C.M.G., was a well-read and wise old gentleman whose
death in 1956 was a sad blow to his people and to his State.
[533] I have enjoyed his hospitality on more than one occasion and
listened with pleasure to his band which, under an Indian
Bandmaster, played Eastern and Western tunes with equal
facility. It was this band that played at Government House in
Aden when Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness
Prince Philip, honoured me with their presence at lunch in
1954. His Highness was himself present on that occasion,
together with other representatives of the Protectorate and the
[523] Colony. In his own house after dinner it was the Sultan's
custom to entertain his guests with a cinema show which,
whether composed of commercial productions or of films he
had himself produced and photographed, was always entertain-
ing, even though the sound was rather overpowering: I could
never understand, since he was certainly not deaf, why he
always had the sound turned up to such a degree that one was
almost deafened. The Sultan loved anything to do with films
and knew more than most amateurs about the mechanism of
his cameras, projectors and tape recorders. It was in Mukalla
that I saw and heard Charlie Chaplin speaking Arabic; an
Arabic sound track having been added by the Sultan himself
to one of the old silent Chaplin films.

636 Politically the State was more advanced than most of the
643 Protectorate States and His Highness ruled with the aid of a
645 State Council, on which were not only the able Sudanese Chief
Minister and the astute Pakistani Finance Minister, but un-
official Arab members representing trading and other interests
642 in the State. Throughout the State, control and government
636 have been decentralised down from the Central Government